

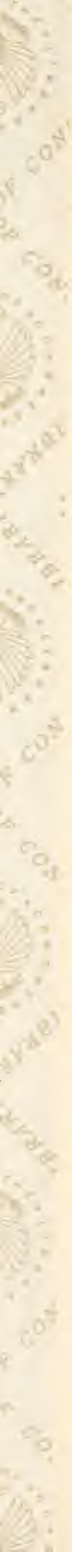
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LETTERS

OF THE



Most Rev. F. N. Blanchet, D. D.

ARCHBISHOP OF OREGON CITY,

ON THE

CATHOLIC INDIAN MISSIONS

OF THE

STATE OF OREGON AND TERRITORIES OF WASHINGTON,
IDAHO AND MONTANA,

together with the

REPLY OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

PORTLAND, OREGON:

Herman & Atkinson, Catholic Sentinel Job Print.
1871.



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LETTER

— OF —

Most Reverend F. N. Blanchet, D. D.,

— TO THE —

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

PORTLAND, OREGON, July 8, 1871.

E. S. PARKER, COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS—

HONORABLE SIR: The shufflings of the Methodists have forced Mr. Charles Lafollet, Indian Agent at Grand Ronde, to give in his resignation. As soon as I heard of it, I immediately sent a telegram to you to beg of you not to accept it, until you heard from me. And now begging leave to make some preliminary remarks before exposing my reasons for the step I have taken, I first say, for your own information, that every Catholic Bishop represents the Catholic Church in his diocese, and that such is the position of the Right Rev. A. M. A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nesqually, in the Territory of Washington, and mine, also, in the State of Oregon; and next, I frankly declare that the new policy of the President, in dividing the care of the Indians among the various religious denominations, has proved to be far from being as favorable to our Indian Catholic missions as it would at first appear to be. I soon discovered my error in this respect, when, induced by that policy to expose to you by letter of January 27th, 1871, the rights I have to the care of the Umatilla, Warm Spring, Grand Ronde, and other Indian Reservations, with the full hope that my rights would be acknowledged and respected, and justice so long delayed, would ~~at last~~ be done to us, I was made aware by your answer of

February 23d, 1871, that the matter was already settled, the reservations distributed, and no change intended. And how had this repartition been made? The Honorable Commissioners at Washington, being all Protestants, and as such having no serious disposition to favor our Catholic Indian Missions, assigned, out of thirty-eight reservations, only four to the Catholics and thirty-four to the Protestants; whereas, had due regard been paid to the earnest wishes of the Indians, and to the rights of our Church for prior instructions, nearly three-quarters, viz, 28 1-2, would have been allotted to the Catholics. How to characterize such a glaring partiality, I do not know.

But our lot is still worse on this western coast; for, of all the Indian reservations of the Territories of Washington, Idaho, Montana and the State of Oregon, not one of them—not even a single one has been adjudged to the Catholics, but all have been given to the Methodist Church by the generous Indian Commissioners, as if these learned gentlemen had been altogether ignorant and perfectly certain there was no Catholic Church on this part of our great Republic, notwithstanding its entering on this coast with the expeditions, by land and by sea, of Mr. Astor, in 1811, and its more visible existence by the arrival of two Catholic priests in 1838, and by their preaching and converting thousands of Indians, from Colville to Chinook Point, from the South of Oregon to Frazer river and Bear lake, and in a special manner on Puget Sound in 1839 and the following years; and all that, without waiting for the subsidies of the Government. Who then but our learned Commissioners can ignore these facts and the history of our Catholic missions among the Indians on our western coast? Namely, besides the two priests who arrived in 1838, and two others in 1842, the arrival of Rev. Father de Smet in the Rocky mountains, in 1840, and his hard and successful labors with his zealous co-operators among the Flat Heads, Kalispels, Pen d'Oreilles, Kootnays and other tribes; the establishment of the Yakima mission by Rev. Father D'Herboomez, now Bishop of British Columbia, and his full success there in hunger, thirst and need, with his indefatigable brethren, from 1847, till the war of 1855 forced him to retire; the mission of Rev. Father Brouillet among the Catholic Cayuses of Umatilla

from 1847 to 1848, and, after the war, its continuation at Walla Walla, by Father Chirouse, from 1852 to 1856, when a new war forced him to abandon it; and its further continuation at the Umatilla reservation by Father Vermersch since 1866 to the present time; the mission of Rev. Father Mesplie, at Dalles City, and his teaching the Indians of Wasco and neighborhood from 1848 to 1857 till these Indians were being taken away from him to be transferred to Warm Spring, seventy miles from Dalles; in fine, the mission of Rev. Father Croquet, at Grand Ronde, from 1860 to the present time, eleven years. With these facts staring them in the face, how could the Indian Commissioners ignore the existence of the Catholic Church and the presence of Bishops and priests in active service in this country? Supposing charitably that these facts were known to them, on what principle could they grant all the Indian reservations to the Methodists? And by what right could they wrest our Catholic Missions from our hands, to leave them in those of a sect diametrically opposed to our teaching? Did they think, perhaps, that Catholic Bishops and priests have no conscience, and no sense of their duty, and that they will humbly and silently submit to such a crying injustice? No, they will not, for a good shepherd gives his life for his sheep. Such is the sad history of our Indian Catholic Missions? Such are the grievous injustices done to us, and all that under a Government which boasts of being the freest and most liberal of all Governments.

It is true that Rev. Father De Smet, by his exertions at Washington, has obtained the restitution of some of our Indian Missions on this coast; but, nevertheless, those of Warm Spring, Grand Ronde, Yakima and others, still remain in the hands of the Methodists, under the direction of the Mission Board, of New York, with Mr. Wilbur, agent at Yakima reservation, charged by the same Mission Board to prepare the list of agents to be appointed. Now, any one knowing the fanatical zeal of that man, who, some years ago, dared to forbid Father St. Onge, the Catholic priest who attends the Catholic mission of Yakima, not only to pass over his reservation, but even to teach the Indians outside of it, may easily understand what our Catholic missions may have to apprehend from his appointments.

This fact proves evidently that the new system of nomination is far from being favorable and is a great deal more dangerous to our Indian missions, than the old one, in which were found agents appointed by the Government, men of liberal views, not only unwilling to interfere with our labors, such as Mr. Barnhart at Umatilla, but also men so well disposed as to show themselves fathers to the Indians and the priest, such as Major Boyle, his successor. The Hon. Secretary of the Interior seems to have been convinced that the Grand Ronde is a Catholic Mission, with a Catholic priest there since 1860. In consequence of this, fearing the danger of a Methodist agent there, and desiring peace and harmony with the priest and Catholics, he made such representations to the Methodist Mission Board as to induce it to withdraw the nomination of Mr. Dyer, and to retain Captain Lafollet. Senator Corbett informed me of the fact by letter of March 17th, 1871, and since, my petition for a Catholic agent has not been complied with; and since Mr. Lafollet has not interfered with our labors there, and may be satisfactory to the Priest, I consented to the agreement. Therefore by it I stand, being altogether opposed to the appointment of a Methodist agent. No doubt the fanatical zealots among them would consider Mr. Lafollet not submissive and not pliant enough to their designs; therefore he has been accused and summoned to Salem; but he so clearly proved the charges made against him to be false that Mr. Stratton was forced to say: "I am satisfied that Mr. Lafollet has been misrepresented." Nevertheless, he has ever since been so much vexed and annoyed by the *Church power and Church responsibility*, as to have been induced to send in his resignation. I dread a Methodist nomination for the sake of peace and harmony; if it take place, I dread trouble may come to the priest and to Catholics. For these reasons, therefore, I entreat you not to accept his resignation, but rather to confirm his position; considering, also, that, in truth, Grand Ronde is not a Methodist, but in reality a Catholic reservation, which I hope, trusting in the Government's justice, will be sooner or later given back to us; and that as such the nomination to the agency belong to us.

In conclusion, accepting the agency of Captain Lafollet, in hopes he will not interfere with our labors, I must further de-

clare that I do solemnly protest, by the present, against the repartition of the Indian reservations made by the Commissioners, on this coast, giving the care and control of our Indian Catholic missions to the Methodist Church; and making an appeal to its sense of justice, I do earnestly entreat the Government to restore them to us. If this unjust distribution has been made knowingly and maliciously, it is the Government's duty to repair this injustice done by its employees. If, on the contrary, it was done innocently and ignorantly, then also it is incumbent on the Government, better informed, to make reparation. And why should the Government refuse to render us justice? Is it because might is right and weakness wrong? Why should the Government have two weights and two measures—one for Protestants and another for Catholics; the first giving Lapwai reservation to the prior Protestant teachers, and the second, refusing Yakima, Warm Spring, Grand Ronde and Siletz to the prior Catholic teachers? Why should the Government be afraid of our teaching the Indians? Is it not a well known fact that our labors for the civilization of the Indians is more successful and far superior to that of the Protestants? Remember the reductions of Paraguay; go and visit the reservation of Rev. Father Chirouse, at Tulalip, and the missions of the Jesuit Fathers at the Rocky mountains, and afterwards go and visit some of the Protestant reservations, and you will be able to understand the wide difference there is between the one and the other. And in order to give you an idea of what is done, at the expense of the Government, in the reservations kept by the Protestants, read the testimony of Capt. John Smith, the actual Methodist agent of Warm Spring, and see in what a poor condition he found the Indians of that place, who, having been taken away from the control of Father Mesplie, of Dalles, in 1856, to be transferred to that reservation, had remained *nine* years under the control of Protestant agents, employees and teachers. Here are his words, taken from his letter of March 22d, 1871, to the Dalles *Mountaineer*: "When I arrived here as agent in 1866, for the Wascos, Tinineos, Upper and Lower Des Chutes, known as the Confederate Tribes and bands of Middle Oregon, a more degraded and rascally set of human beings did not exist on the globe, I do believe. Whiskey drinking, gambling, polygamy, the custom of buying and sell-

ing women, and all known crimes, had full sway," notwithstanding their having been under the control, not of Father Mesplie, but, forsooth, under that of Protestant agents, employees and teachers. And what was found there may also be found elsewhere. Such is the success of the Protestant rule, in general among the Indians. Ah, the Jesuit Fathers, without the Government subsidies, had succeeded in a few years, to reduce to the Christian rule, and right civilization many of the barbarous tribes of the Rocky mountains. Had the poor Warm Spring Indians and others, been committed to their care, in less than *nine* years, no doubt, they would have brought them to a true Christian rule and right civilization. And how can Government expect that the Indians may be brought to a true Christian civilization by sects not Christian, but infidel? No, we are not of those who think and say that all sects and various denominations are equally good, though teaching doctrines diametrically opposed to each other. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did not teach these contradictory doctrines. Woe to the Indians to whom these contradictory doctrines are taught by dissenting sects!

Please understand well, honorable sir, that in all I have said in this already long letter, I have been but the humble advocate of our poor Indians, who have neither voice nor organ to make their grievances and complaints known to you, and whose religious belief is thus trifled, not to say interfered with, and liberty of conscience virtually denied. As innocent children, they are not aware of, nor do they yet see the snares that are laid for them, but as their Bishop and spiritual guide, I have taken up their defence and protest.

I remain, with sentiments of high consideration, honorable sir,

Your obedient, humble servant,

† F. N. BLANCHET,

Archbishop of Oregon City.

R E P L Y

— OF THE —

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, }
Washington, D. C., July 31, 1871. }

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 8th instant.

It is proper for me to inform you that Father De Smet, of St. Louis, is the recognized agent and representative of the Roman Catholics in the appointment of Indian agents.

Supposing you to be informed of the condition of things in Oregon, and that you are authorized to speak for the Roman Catholic denomination of Christians, I have concluded, in deference to your wishes, to decline accepting, for the present, the resignation of agent Charles Lafollet.

The character of your letter seems to call for some remarks, which I will endeavor to make in such a spirit as to me seems necessary for the government of all those engaged in this work.

I desire, first, to inform you that the Indian agencies had all been assigned before I took possession of this office, the Grand Ronde among the others.

These assignments were made, I know, with the purpose of fairness towards all denominations of Christians intended to be embraced in the work of Indian civilization. That these assignments would prove acceptable, in every case, to all denominations, was not anticipated. It was hoped, however, that a spirit of Christian charity and comprehensive philanthropy, would induce

each denomination to accept the work assigned to it by the Department, with an earnest effort to *aid* the Department and thereby forward the work placed in their hands.

Whatever may be your individual sentiments in reference to the correctness or heresy of other denominations, designated by you as "dissenting sects," I presume from the general intelligence pervading your letter, you will be able to see that this Department cannot recognize or be governed by sentiments which would exclude from the work these other denominations.

As a representative of the entire people of this great nation, this Department is bound to view these "dissenting sects," as you call them, in a more catholic, and, I hope, a more charitable spirit. We cannot, therefore, denounce them as "infidels."

In reference to the recognition of the Roman Catholic Church, it has been, now is, and will continue to be the desire of this Department, to treat that branch of the Christian Church, in this work, like all others, in a spirit of fairness and liberality. Had I time to go into details, I could show you by the work assigned to the Roman Catholic Church, and by the changes made in that work, at their own instance, that this spirit has, heretofore, governed me; and I beg to assure you that I shall hereafter endeavor to give you evidence of the continuation of this spirit, by doing for your Church everything which fairness and equality, as far as I can arrive at them, demand.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. DELANO, *Secretary.*

MOST REV. F. N. BLANCHET, *Archbishop of Oregon City.*

LETTER

— OF —

Most Reverend F. N. Blanchet, D. D.,

— TO THE —

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

PORTLAND, Oregon, Sept. 12, 1871.

HON. C. DELANO, SECRETARY OF INTERIOR:

HONORABLE SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of July 31st, in reference to mine of the 8th previous. Incessant and unavoidable occupations are the causes of my postponing so long the remarks which yours requires at my hands.

To your information that Rev. Father DeSmet is the acknowledged agent and representative of the Roman Catholics in the appointment of Indian Agent, I beg leave to say that I never was apprised of said appointment, either by him or by the Department; that, had I been consulted, I would have objected, for the reason of preferring a direct correspondence with the Department to a circuitous and longer one, requiring much information to enable an agent to act efficiently; and further, that my letter of July 8th, contained, besides the matter of Indian Agency, an important subject—that of our rights to certain Indian reservations, either ignored or acknowledged and purposely rejected, which could not be treated but with the direct and proper authority.

Your supposing that I am informed of the condition of things in Oregon, and that I am authorized to speak for the Roman Cath-

olies, is excusable only on the plea of your ignoring that, by the constitution of our Church, every Catholic Bishop is, in his diocese, what a father is in a family, a Governor in a State, and a minister in his office, with the difference of being more strictly obliged, in conscience, than these, to know the condition and wants of his diocese; and that he is the one authorized to speak for his spiritual children. Such is my condition in the whole State of Oregon, my diocese. What could a stranger know, do, and say for me in that respect?

It may seem to you that "these assignments were made with the purpose of fairness towards all denominations of Christians, intended to be embraced in the work of Indian civilization;" but was it truly so? Were the assignments made to such as had the better and stronger rights? Let us see. The President in his last message to Congress, announced that he had determined to give the agencies to such religious denominations "as had, heretofore, established missions among the Indians, and perhaps to some other denominations that would undertake the work, on the same terms," that is, as "missionary work." Such is the rule given by the President: first, to the prior right or founders of missions; second, to some others. For fairness sake, therefore, and in order to put in practice that rule, the first assignments were being made to the prior rights or founders of missions at their own expenses, among the Indians, long before and without awaiting the aid of the Government. Has this been done? Have not, on the contrary, in many instances, prior rights and founders of missions been put aside, and replaced by strangers; and assignments made to individuals, who, before the Government aid, had never thought of, never cared, never spent one single cent for the Indian civilization? The Indians of Puget Sound were taught the Catholic doctrine by Bishop Demers and myself as early as 1839 and the following years. Are they all under our control? Those of Yakima have been, from 1847 to 1856, in the hands of Fathers Chirouze and D'Herbomez, and they are now under the rule of a Methodist Minister. Those of Wasco had been abandoned by the Methodists and taught our doctrine from 1848 to 1857, and they have been passed over to the Methodists. Rev. Father Croquet founded the mission of Grand Ronde, built a Church and has been there nearly twelve years; and it is still uncertain, whether

or not, the desires of the Indians and the rights of the priest shall be granted. We have also the prior right on Siletz and Alsea. The Indians of the old Spanish provinces, California, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico (now a part of our great Republic) were converted some hundred years ago, to the Catholic faith. Are they all under Catholic control? No, I am told the Indian missions of California are under the charge of Protestants. The Reformed Dutch, Presbyterians, and Jews, have been selected for the tribes of Arizona and New Mexico, who are Catholics; and strange to say, a Spiritualist, has been appointed over the Pueblo Indians, in New Mexico, numbering over seven thousand, thoroughly civilized and instructed in the Catholic Religion. The Papagos in Arizona, numbering six thousand, converted by the Jesuit Fathers, industrious and self-supporting, have not a Catholic agent. The Pattawatomí Indians, in Kansas, are all Catholics; they are so firm in their faith that a Baptist mission had to sell out and leave. They are not happy because they have a Quaker Agent inflicted upon them. The Osages are also all Catholics, and they are also under a Quaker control. The Kansas are also Catholics, and yet have not an agent of their faith. The Menomonee have been Catholics since 1835, and they have no Catholic Agent. The Oneidas are, a majority of them, Catholics, and they are under the charge of some agent selected from our dissenting friends. The Chippewas of Lake Superior are cared for in a similar manner, notwithstanding the fact that they are Catholics. The Peorias and confederate bands are Catholics, but are also under Protestant influence. I fear I am tiring your patience by enumerating the many tribes that injustice has been done to. I pass over and omit making mention of the right of the Indians, to have their desires of following the Catholic religion respected and attended to. Let this suffice to prove that fairness and justice have been very far from being done to our Catholic missions in the distribution of assignments.

You say "it was not anticipated that these assignments would be acceptable in every case, to all denominations." Surely, it was not and could not; for fairness and strict justice could not put aside the priority of teaching and establishing missions among the Indians; for if it does, then it interferes with the liberty of conscience, by taking away from the poor Indians

the faith they have already embraced, or at least, by not affording the means to improve what they hold as sacred.

You add: "It was hoped, however, that a spirit of Christian charity and comprehensive philanthropy would induce each denomination to accept the work assigned to it by the Department, with an earnest effort to aid the Department and thereby forward the work placed in their hands." In supposing that each denomination, in accepting the work assigned to it, would do its best to aid the Department, and thereby forward the work placed in their hands; and also, that some of them would be induced to do that in a spirit of Christian charity and comprehensive philanthropy, rather than by a spirit of selfish interest and aggrandizement, I here solemnly declare and affirm that no one will and can do it more disinterestedly and economically, more effectually and successfully, and with a greater and higher spirit of pure Christian charity and true philanthropy than our missionaries of the Catholic Church. One needs but open his eyes to be convinced of my assertion. The Government is not ignorant of the truth of this fact; the Commissioner of Indian Affairs acknowledged it, in his annual report, in 1870, with the remarks that: "No appreciable progress has been made in taming or conciliating the wild and warlike Apaches in Arizona. It is claimed by persons, who doubtless are cognizant of the fact, that the Roman Catholic clergy are the only class of men they will not molest, and to whose counsels alone they will listen." This frank acknowledgment proves incontestably the superiority of our Catholic missions among the Indians over those of Protestants; and this being so, what then might or could be the plausible reason, why the Government, well aware of their inferior capacity, is nevertheless so much and always inclined to throw our Catholic Indian missions in the hands of Protestants; and is also so backward, not to say so much opposed, to our holding our Catholic missions and to our having the charge of those, to which we have the best title.

You further say "that whatever may be your individual sentiments in reference to the correctness or heresy of other denominations, designated by you as 'dissenting sects,' I presume from the general intelligence pervading your letter, you will be able to see that this Department cannot recognize, or be governed by sentiments which would exclude from the work these

other denominations." Perfectly right, honorable sir, for when I was brought to deplore, in my last, the rather too lamentable position of our poor Indians, of being taught contradictory doctrines by dissenting sects, I never intended to bring this Department to set in judgment between them; for I have seen, as I do still clearly and perfectly see and understand, that the Department is forbidden by the Constitution to show any official preference to any denomination, to recognize them or be governed by sentiments of exclusion; but, in the meantime, I acknowledge also, in the Department, the strict obligation of respecting and protecting, not only the rights of each society, but also those of each individual, especially in reference to the liberty of conscience and the freedom of religion; and that, not only in favor of the whites, but also in favor of the poor, ignorant and truly pitiable children of our forests. Is this sacred obligation faithfully observed? Are all the rights of the Indians duly respected, their religious desires attended to, when Catholic agents are denied to them, and Protestant agents forced on Catholic Indian Missions, or on Indians Catholic at heart, among whom they exercise all the influence of their position to impose on them their own religious system, or that of the religious denomination that employs them? Is that fairness, justice and liberty of conscience?

You say further: "As a representative of the entire people of this great nation, this Department is bound to view these 'dissenting sects,' as you call them, in a more catholic, and I hope, a more charitable spirit; we cannot denounce them as infidels." But in calling them dissenting sects, I have done nothing but what is generally done by all Catholics and non-Catholics, from the well known fact of the religious dissensions reigning among them, and from their being cut off, as branches, from the body of the true Church of Christ; for the word sect comes from the Latin *secare, sectum*, to cut, to separate, which term can never be applied to the Roman Catholic Church, because she was from the beginning and separated from no one. In speaking of the misfortune of the Indians in being taught contradictory doctrines by dissenting sects, I did not call them all infidels, but I said that they were taught by some who were not Christians, but infidels. That there are things which an individual can do, but the Government cannot, is evident. Thus, the

Government cannot sit in judgment and denounce any one, or any sect as infidel, because not being a judge of conscience, it is only bound by the constitution to rule in temporal concerns and to view these dissenting sects with a general legal and equal forbearance, which I could not call with you, a more catholic and charitable spirit than mine, because it is no condescension, no charity and no favor, but a strict obligation and an imperious duty at the hands of the Government.

And if by your words, *a more catholic and a more charitable spirit*, you mean that we are intolerant, I beg leave to explain that we are indeed those who believe that the truth taught by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is but one, indivisible and unchangeable; and that the dissenting sects and contradictory doctrines cannot be equally right and good, as our Protestant brethren affirm they are, for the denying of which we are called *intolerant, uncharitable*. But can there be found anywhere in the whole world a society of Christians in which the exercise and practice of Christian charity and philanthropy are better, more generally and more effectually exercised and practised than in the Roman Catholic Church, both in the civil and Christian intercourse of life? It is true that in matters of faith and morals, we are strict, and appear to be intolerant, because we cannot go as far as our brethren of the other denominations. It is not our fault, but rather, if I may say so, that of truth, which, being one, indivisible, unchangeable, is not subject to the will of men. Therefore, there is not the least shadow of intolerance in adhering to the truth and refusing to part with it; and, consequently, true charity to ourselves consists in adhering closely and in holding steadfastly to the true saving faith when found; and true charity to our neighbors consists in preaching it to them and also practising it. On the contrary, uncharitableness to their neighbors and to themselves is evidently on the side of those who admit, believe and preach that contradictory doctrines are equally right and good. In this light, how can a Roman Catholic justly be called uncharitable and intolerant?

I am sorry to say, and I hope you will be able to see by what I have said and proven, that the Indian Department, with all its desires of fairness and liberality towards our Church, has, nevertheless, failed in many instances to bring about its good

dispositions. Whose fault is it? Who thwarted its designs? he late Indian Commissioner might perhaps say. But I thank you most sincerely for what you have done by the work assigned to our Church, by the changes made at our own instances, and for the assurance you give me that the spirit of fairness and equality which animated you heretofore, will continue to govern you in future, and that you will give me evidence of your good disposition as far as you can arrive at our demands. But remember, honorable sir, that you cannot arrive at that point of fairness and justice if, by equality, you mean the numerical number of all denominations; for, by that reasoning you would give and pass our rights of priority of teaching and founding of missions, and also the rights of the Catholic Indians, in the hands of those who have no right over them, and are hostile to our Catholic teaching; and thereby you would interfere with the liberty of conscience.

I said in my last, that, had due regard been paid to the earnest desires of the Indians, and to the priority of our teaching, out of thirty-eight reservations, instead of four given to Catholics and thirty-four to Protestants, nearly three-quarters, or twenty-eight and one-half, would have been our lot; but now, it appears that the number of agencies is not only thirty-eight, but one hundred. Therefore, knowing well what has been done among the Indians of this coast by the late Bishop Demers and myself, and some other priests, from 1839 till the present time; and being also informed of what has been done by the Catholic clergy among the Indian tribes of the other parts of our great Republic, I do not hesitate to say that, reasoning on the same principle as before, if due regard and respect should have been paid to the priority of Catholic teaching and founding missions, and to the earnest desires of numerous tribes of Indians, out of one hundred reservations, instead of fourteen given to Catholics and eighty-six to Protestants, nearly three-quarters or seventy-five should have been allotted to our Church. No wonder of that, if one considers the zeal and self-denial of our unmarried missionaries. You may now see by this explanation, what kind of justice and fairness it would be to divide the agencies according to the numerical number of the various denominations; and what a greivous prevarication we should be guilty of in consent-

ing to give away to the adversaries of our Church what is most sacred to us and to our Catholic Indians.

I must add another word, for I cannot conclude without speaking of the egregious injury offered to the clergy and Catholics of this country in the composition of the Indian Commission and the proceedings of that Christian body. For there is a Catholic Church in these United States: it contains 8,000,000 members. That number nearly equals that of the believers of all the other Christian denominations put together; the existence of the Catholic Church is, therefore, patent and staring in the face.

Nevertheless, that Church, counting sixty-two Bishops, clergy by thousands, cathedrals and academies by hundreds and its members by millions; that Church has been altogether ignored by the President in the composition of the Indian Commission; so far and so much as, when we had a right to four among the eight members of the Commission, not even a single one has been conceded to our Church, to represent her, to plead and defend the rights of our Indian missions before that body. And likewise, that Indian Commission, acting on the same principle, has proceeded in the distribution of assignments or agencies as if our Church did not exist, or was of little or no consideration: witness the distribution of reservations on this coast, in the beginning, and all allotted to the Methodists; in the other parts of the country, many Catholic, and even old Spanish Catholic reservations, placed under the control of Protestant, Jew, Spiritualist and infidel agents. How could this be done? Has, then, the Government so soon forgotten how numerous and bravely the Catholics fought in the late war, and what they also did in the war of the independence. Is that giving equal justice to all? Ah, for the glory of our great nation, I deplore such unqualified religious partiality. Would to God that you had been in the Ministry at the time!

In conclusion, I renew, by the present, the protest I made in my last against the unjust repartition of the Indian reservations made on this coast; and also, as the oldest Bishop in the United States, I do hereby solemnly protest, in my name and in the name of the other Catholic Bishops of the land, against the unjust giving and passing our Indian Catholic missions, all over

the country, into the hands and under the control of agents of a persuasion different from ours ; and, because I trust in your honesty, integrity and in the uprightness of your heart for justice, I appeal to your tribunal for the redress of our grievances and for the satisfaction and justice due to our claims in behalf of our poor Catholic Indians.

In the meantime, please accept the assurance of my respects and the high considerations with which I have the honor to be, honorable sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

† F. N. BLANCHET,

Archbishop of Oregon City.

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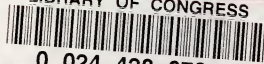


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